



BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

Non-cancerous growths or areas of pigment or color change on the skin.

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Benign skin lesions fall into the following categories:

- Tags—soft, flesh-colored buds, often on stalks, found on the neck, armpits or groin.
- Moles—flat or raised lesions with clearly defined borders. Moles may be black, blue, red, yellow or brown.
- Cherry spots—pinhead-sized, bright-red lesions on the chest or back.
- Strawberry marks—bright-red raised areas in infants that grow until they are removed.
- Keloids—thick, pale, irregular growths that begin at the site of a scar and gradually increase in size.
- Dermatofibromas—rounded nodules, usually brownish and usually on the legs.
- Freckles—flat, brownish spots of pinhead-size or larger.

CAUSES

Unknown, but most people have a few benign skin lesions.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- Family history of benign skin lesions.
- Pregnancy or use of oral contraceptives (brownish, freckle-like patches only).

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

To decrease freckles, avoid excessive sun exposure. Other forms cannot be prevented.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Treatment is usually unnecessary because most skin lesions are harmless. Suspicious or unsightly lesions can be removed surgically. If the affected area is large or in a prominent place, plastic surgery may be necessary after removal.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- Malignant change in moles.
- Bleeding in strawberry marks.



TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- Diagnostic tests may include skin biopsy (removal of a small amount of tissue for laboratory examination that aids in diagnosis).
- Examine skin lesions regularly for signs of growth, color change, pain, infection or bleeding, especially those that are constantly rubbed or irritated by clothing.
- Surgery to remove lesions that enlarge, bleed, change color, are slow to heal or are unsightly.
- If a lesion is removed, cover the area with a clean dressing and protect against injury. Ointments are rarely needed.

MEDICATIONS

Medicine usually is not necessary for this disorder. Makeup may be helpful in covering unsightly blemishes.

ACTIVITY

No restrictions.

DIET

No special diet.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

You or a family member has a skin lesion that enlarges, bleeds, changes color, is painful or doesn't heal.